

Analyse the impact of a range of contextual influences on classroom processes

[Education](#), [School](#)



Analyse the impact of a range of contextual influences on classroom processes. (1500 words) In examining classroom processes it is imperative that a variety of current themes in education are identified. These factors then form the foundation of contextual influences on macro level developments, ideologies and discourses affecting those on a micro level. This essay will then maintain focus on the restricted views on progressivism and learning, with the shift towards vocational education, through the influence of an authoritarian government seeking to control of the educational agenda.

In reviewing the definition of education, it cannot be placed under an umbrella due to its' purpose differentiating somewhat from person to person (Wilson, 2000). According to Thus Plato, children are educated in a training sense to become " perfect citizens in the interests of a well-ordered state" (Wilson, 2000 p. 6). With reference to this, education can be used to endorse a favourable set of ideal values and social practices as set out by Wilson as part of his second temptation that needs special notice (Wilson, 2000).

In correspondence to this, Dewey's model of learning closely relates to this promoting educational progressivism, with the main principle categorising humans as social animals, learning best amongst real life activities, with strong emphasis on problem based learning, following his beliefs that we learn best through action rather than memorisation. (Miettinen, 2000). Progression is embedded in the National Curriculum, with the assumption that children learn in the same sequence with the only difference being the speed at which they do this at ().

Going against the Piaget cognitivist view and his theory around assimilation and accommodation of constructs and concepts. If children worked along the same sequence then they would have to have the same experiences in order to assimilate new information to that of our existing knowledge, referring to the process of adding to our schemata. However when lacking in some pre-existing knowledge to form a connection to new acquired information, rather than adding to the schemata to accommodate the new information the schemata may need to be modified ().

Having differences in ones experiences causes individuals to learn and work to different sequences. In view of the National Curriculum it often varies from country to country in order to comply with the Nations needs, as global forces are having a damaging effect upon rich humane conceptions, seeing education merely as part of a project often referred to as an investment in human capital for the foundation of success, with their primary assets being that of its' fellow citizens skills and insights ().

In response to this learning is seen as key to prosperity as various parties work together to make the national curriculum easier “ back tracking from an overloaded national curriculum to a more manageable one by teachers” (Bottery, 2000 p. 29). In 1988 following the education reform act the National curriculum came into practice, with no pure direction as to who holds the main power towards its contents, although did consist of specific subjects associated with national assessments.

Around 1995 decisions about the national curriculum were based on a compromise between the national and local government. (Gur, 2006) The

curriculum itself is not as straight forward as one might assume, many professionals have tried to define such a broad concept. Kerrs (Gur, 2006 p. 40) defines curriculum as having “ four interrelated components: Curriculum objectives are defined; knowledge to be taught is decided; learning experiences are selected for the pupil; this process is evaluated whether it is achieved or not”.

Since the national curriculum has been brought to educational systems the government has gained power to dictate what is required in terms of ones learning, which in itself has changed simultaneously over the years(). “ A largely unquestioned consensus proclaims that educational policy is an effective tool for delivering prosperity and increasing rates of economic growth” (Wolf, 2004). Hindering this is the rise inglobalization, and large impact that market forces bring to enterprises such as education, that are changing on a daily basis (Bottery, 2000).

With response to this education is being demonised as a result or progressivism with the blame of societal breakdown, creating moral panic (). Thus has been seen as the root cause of aspects of this breakdown creating a lax, rebellious workshy youth with presence of diminishing economic performance, due to the increase in unemployment and the lack of basic skills to those who start in the workforce upon leaving education.

() In agreement to this liberal democrats have underlined the long term problem with high levels of youth unemployment to which Petrook has identified that “ Almost three quarters (69%) of employers believe that failures in the education system are damaging the UK’s economic

performance, with 73% believing they are contributing to a skills crisis” ()lacking basic skills to enter the workforce upon their departure from the educational system.

() In contrast to this the teachers role is viewed to facilitate ones learning and provide the correct pedagogy for this to take place to which the government decides whether or not the teaching is to their standards through Ofsted reports along with teacher to learner ratios with each settings employment status each academic year, following the curriculum contents. () Amongst others, the government decides which schools get what funding, based on the qualifications the school can obtain and the amount of students that attend their educational system, which then gets presented in the league tables ().

However due to the increase in competition between schools, not everyone gets the most out of the educational system as most often in schools teachers favour those who can gain results and show this amongst the schools effectiveness to gain more funding rather than on those who may not reach the schools high expectations. The schools main concerns as research shows is to concentrate on pass marks as it does not matter what is being learnt so long as learning takes place.

The educational system has been reviewed by the authoritarian government and recently Miliband has pledged to introduce new vocational qualifications seen as the technical baccalaureate for 14 to 18 year olds who do not intend of entering into further education by means of university, with the condition that students study English and maths during this time () this appears to be

largely influenced by Alison Wolfs report (Department For Education, 2012) ' analyses 14- 16 year olds being on courses encouraged by the league tables by which may lead children to dead-ends, as a quarter to a third of such courses do not lead onto higher education or good jobs'.

This group of students are viewed as the forgotten 50 with the focus until now being on those entering University. Miliban states " we need to build aculturein our country where vocational qualifications are not seen as 2nd class certificates but for what they can be - a real route on and up to quality apprenticeships and jobs" (). As vocational education has been seen as not good enough, to the point that the overall vocational qualifications have been downgraded, some such as an engineering diploma has gone from the equivalent to five GCSE's to just one, despite the work ethic being that of five subjects, and the basic skills lying in more academic subjects such as maths and English are still failing two years later (Harrison, 2011 and Burns, 2012).

This in itself should be more favourable than the vocational education that was originally introduced during the 1980/90's, with the conservative government acting with its employers to reduce the training costs and replacing the original dual system in place to which appentices attended college once a week for training, with competence based vocational qualifications. When this took place much criticism with " question on wisdom of allowing appentices procedural know-how with understanding of theoretical principles on which it is based" (QUOTE). 1998 this was then announced as a failure as " national skills taskforce should not be allowed to

conceal its significance for future vocational education and training in the UK". (QUOTE) In conclusion